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## THEODORE S. CHAPMAN.

Theodore Stillman Chapman was born at Becket, Massachusetts, in Berkshire Hills, on March 31, 1849. His father, Theodore Chapman, was at that time a lumberman. Later he emigrated to Illinois, and died there when Theodore Stillman was seven years old. His mother's maiden name was Julia E. Wadsworth. She was one of six girls, four of whom married ministers, and two of them went as Missionaries to Foreign Fields. As Theodore Chapman's widow, she married Dr. Norman Harris, and went with him as a Missionary to Burma, India, where she remained four years, and until she lost her eyesight. These four years Theodore Stillman spent with an uncle, Hiram Johnson, on a farm near Rockford, Illinois.

When his mother returned she went to Hamilton, New York, to live, and young Theodore Stillman returned there to continue his education. After two years at Hamilton College (now Colgate College) the West attracted him, and he went to La Porte, Indiana, where he had an uncle. Here he taught school for a couple of years, after which he pushed on to Saint Louis, and then to Edwardsville, Madison County, Illinois. Here he cut corn to help himself along, and accidentally cut his leg. It took some time and practically all his money, to heal it. He then came to Godfrey, and got off the train there, undecided whether to go to Carlinville or to Jerseyville. He consulted Mr. Churchill, who was conducting a store, there, as to which was the better town, and after a few moment's thought, Mr. Churchill replied, "Well, I'll tell you. I think Jerseyville is a mite the better town." So T. S. Chapman came to Jerseyville on election day, November 4, 1869.

He taught school in Jersey County three years. The first year at the Shakerag District School. The two years following he was Principal of the school at Otterville, then the only graded school in the county. During these three years he de-



THEODORE S. CHAPMAN.

voted all spare time to the study of the law, and supplemented this study with six months experience in a law office in St. Louis. He was admitted to the Bar in 1874, and at once opened an office to practice in Jerseyville.

While teaching at the Shakerag School, he boarded at the home of William Landon, one of his directors. Here he made the acquaintance of Sarah A. Landon, who was one of his pupils. This friendship ripened into affection, and on December 31, 1874, they were married. Four boys resulted from this union; Harry Landon Chapman, of Jerseyville; Theodore Chapman and Paul Wadsworth Chapman, of Chicago; and Truman Landon Chapman, of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. There are also four grandchildren surviving him, the children of Paul Wadsworth Chapman.

#### HIS PROFESSIONAL AND BUSINESS CAREER.

He was actively engaged in the practice of law in Jerseyville, for twenty-five years, and during this time he was interested in the litigation of the cases involving the largest amounts of money of any that have ever appeared in Jersey County, namely, George Washington Educational Trust Fund, Joshua Neeley Will Case, and the P. D. Cheney Will Case. The George Washington Educational Trust Fund Case did not involve an overly large amount, but it did involve a principle that Theodore S. Chapman believed should be established, and it was vigorously contested, and the litigation extended over several years. In the P. D. Cheney Will Case, he was Executor and Trustee, and so did not appear of record as attorney; nevertheless, he was the counsellor and the main-spring of the defense.

His taste and his preference were for the chancery practice, as the above indicate. He was faithful and vigilant in his clients' interests, and was a worthy opponent. He became interested in litigation only after first being himself convinced that his prospective client was in the right; then his client's interest became a part of him, and he fought tenaciously, with the result that he was uniformly successful.

In the year 1891, after the close of his senatorial term, he became associated with the Investment Banking House of N.

W. Harris & Company, now the Harris Trust and Savings Bank of Chicago, and took charge of the corporation department. After one year there he returned to Jerseyville, but for many years afterward was paid an annual retainer by this investment banking house, to serve it in cases of special need.

During these years the Galveston flood occurred, and later Galveston sought to legally default in the payment of her indebtedness, by authorization of the State Legislature. The bond holders organized and elected Charles S. Fairchild, Ex-Secretary of the Treasury, Chairman, and Theodore S. Chapman represented this syndicate of bond holders at Austin, Texas, where, after months of labor, his efforts met with signal success.

In January 1903, he organized the Jersey State Bank, and was its president continuously until his death. He was the controlling stockholder, and its success was very gratifying to him. It demanded and received his best thought and attention.

In June 1891 he moved with his family to a farm—which he called “Homeridge”—adjoining Jerseyville, where he lived until his death. He took an active interest in agriculture, giving special attention to the improvement of the soil, so that when he died he left what is perhaps one of the most fertile farms in Illinois. The fattening of cattle attracted him, and he took several premiums at the International Stock Show at Chicago, for fat cattle. He was truly an agriculturalist, in theory and in practice.

#### HIS POLITICAL ACTIVITIES.

In 1882, he was endorsed by the Republicans of Jersey County for minority representative, and although at the convention he released his delegates after the twentieth ballot from further obligations to him, they stood by him to a man for two days, until 766 ballots had been taken. In 1883 he was nominated and was elected in 1884 to represent this (the Thirty-seventh) Senatorial district, in the Lower House. He was a member of the house steering committee, took an active part in the legislation that was enacted and was a member of the famous “Logan 103”.

In 1886 he received the unanimous vote of the senatorial convention of this district for State senator, and was elected by 197 plurality in a district that was considered an impregnable democratic stronghold. The district had theretofore been some 2,400 democratic. Senator Chapman was the only Republican who ever represented this district in the State Senate. He was chosen to be its president *pro tem*, upon the reorganization of the Senate in 1888.

In 1887 he introduced in the Senate what became known as the "Free School Book Bill". It attracted considerable attention throughout the State, and its friends and enemies were many. The school book publishing houses fought the bill vigorously and succeeded in defeating it by a narrow margin. Its introduction, and the strenuous and manly fight he made for it, are indicative of his public spirit.

In 1887 he also introduced and secured the passage of a resolution requiring the commissioners of the Joliet and Chester penitentiaries to investigate the probable cost of a plant for the manufacture of binding twine, and also the cost per pound, at which the twine could be turned over to the farmers of the State. This resolution was prompted by the monopolistic manufacture and the high cost of binding twine.

In 1899, Governor Tanner, without solicitation, made him the first pure food commissioner of the State. In a few months, however, he resigned to devote himself to his personal interests at Jerseyville.

In 1896 he made a contest for the Republican nomination of lieutenant governor, but was not successful. In 1900 he entered the contest again, but withdrew after the nomination of Governor Yates, who was from the same congressional district.

#### HIS PHILANTHROPIC INTERESTS.

While teaching school at Otterville, he learned of a fund left by George Washington, an ex-slave, to be used to erect a monument to his dead master—the monument to cost approximately \$1,500.00—and the balance of the estate to be used to assist in the education of colored people. The purpose of this

trust had never been executed, and his first important case, upon being admitted to the bar, was to require an accounting of the administrator of this estate. In 1875 the Circuit Court of Jersey County found \$9,491.39 in the hands of the administrator, which was ordered paid over to a trustee designated by the court, and \$1,500.00 was ordered to be used in erecting the monument. From that time to his death, this fund has practically been under the management of Theodore S. Chapman. The report of the treasurer of the board of trustees having charge of this fund, at the March term, 1915, of the Circuit Court, showed \$23,960.72 in the fund. Since 1884 the fund has not been without at least one colored pupil in school, and at times has had as high as three or four. From 1880 to 1892, Theodore S. Chapman was treasurer of the board of trustees, and since 1892 to his death, he was president of the board. He died intestate, but left among his papers a memoranda requesting that his heirs make certain donations, among which was a request that \$3,000.00 be presented to the George Washington educational fund. This request, as well as all others, have been gladly complied with.

When the accounting and the fund had been secured, he outlined a plan for the execution of the trust, which has been signally successful, and has been approved by educators generally, and copied by benefactors.

Judge P. D. Cheney of Jerseyville, who died in 1900, left a will fashioned after the George Washington educational fund plan, and made Theodore S. Chapman executor and trustee. The estate was inventoried at approximately \$250,000.00, with \$51,000.00 indebtedness. In May, 1914, the trustee turned over the major portion of the estate to the beneficiary, and it was valued at that time at over \$500,000.00, and had no indebtedness. This estate and its concomitant trusts required a great deal of thought and attention, and was one of the best works of his lifetime. When he turned it over to the beneficiary, very largely enhanced in value, and its trusts executed, a great load had been removed, and no doubt gave him a feeling of a task well performed.

He presented the city of Jerseyville with a public drinking fountain, where man and beast could quench their thirst. To secure the installation of a free public library, he gave a room, rent free, and later was a leader in securing the Carnegie donation for the building.

He was a member of the board of trustees of Shurtleff College from 1895 until his death. From 1905 till 1908, he was president of the board.

He was a friend and counsellor of young men, and assisted many of them to an education, and to their start in life. He was always ready to render assistance and counsel from his great storehouse of experience. He enthused the young and befriended the old.

He was careful and painstaking in all he did. He was public spirited and democratic in his thoughts and tastes. He was conscientious and scrupulously just in his public life. Those of us left behind know that he lived his life exceedingly well. He was a most useful member of the Illinois State Historical Society.